

(14)

A

SERMON

Preach'd before the

Honourable House of Commons,

At the Church of *St. Margaret Westminster.*

ON

TUESDAY, Nov. 22. 1709.

BEING THE

Day of THANKSGIVING

For the Signal and Glorious Victory obtained
near *Mons*, and for the other Great Suc-
cesses of Her Majesties Arms, this last Year,
under the Command of the Duke of
MARLBOROUGH.

By **SAMUEL CLARK, D. D.**
Rector of *St James's Westminster*, and Chap-
lain in Ordinary to Her Majesty.

L O N D O N,

Printed by *W. B.* for *James Knapton*, at the Crown in
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Mercurij 23^o die Novembris 1709.

Ordered,

THAT the Thanks of this House be Given to Dr. *Clark*, for the Sermon by Him Preached before this House Yesterday at St. *Margaret's Westminster*; And that He be Desired to Print the Same; And that the Lord *William Powlett*, Sir *Joseph Jekyll*, and Sir *Peter King*, do Acquaint Him therewith.

Ordered, That no other Person do Presume to Print the said Sermon, but such Person as the said Dr. *Clark* shall appoint.

Paul Jodrell,
Cler' Dom. Cam'

P S A L M 50. 23.

Whoso offereth Praise, glorifies me; and to him that ordereth his Conversation aright, will I shew the Salvation of God.

THERE is no Nation under Heaven, since the Times of God's governing the Jews by an immediate Theocracy, that has seen more and clearer instances of the interposition of Providence on their behalf, or has had greater Blessings and Means of publick Prosperity put into their Hands; than we of this Nation have had. As *the Hills stand about Jerusalem*, said the Psalmist, (Psal. 125. 2.) *even so standeth the Lord round about his People*: As the Seas encompass our Land, may We no less justly say, even so does the Protection of Providence surround Us on all Sides. We have enjoyed a long and uninterrupted Succession of the Blessings of Heaven from above, and of the Earth beneath; of fruitful Seasons, and a large and plentiful Increase. We have lived under a secure Establishment of all our private Rights and just Liberties, in a Wise and well-constituted Government, and in the regular Execution of good and wholesome Laws. We have had the free Exercise of our Religion continued almost to us alone, when so many of those about us have been deprived of that inestimable Liberty. We have had Deliverances little less than miraculous, frequently vouchsafed us; and have seen many visible interpositions of Providence,

dence, in causing such Concurrences of Circumstances for our Advantage, as no human Wisdom could either fore-see, direct, or over-rule.

When after a long Establishment of our Peace and

Deut. 32. 15.

Prosperity, we, like *Jeshurun*, waxed fat and kicked; When our Prosperity made us wanton, and we forgot God, who poured these Benefits upon us; When corruption of Manners prevailed over the Purity of our Religion, and we grew cool in our Zeal for the Service of God, and for the Honour of his Laws; Then did it please God to threaten us with the Rod of arbitrary Power, and with the Fears of Popish Slavery; to awaken us out of our careless neglect of Religion, and to compose our little differences, and unchristian Animosities among ourselves. Yet did he threaten us only with these Judgments, and show us the Terror of them as it were at a distance, but did not suffer them to prevail over us; removing them from us by an unparalleled Deliverance, almost as soon as they approached, and that we began to feel the smart of them. And from the Time of that wonderful Deliverance, even unto this Day, has God continued to bless us with Success abroad under victorious Armies, and with Peace and Plenty at Home, under pious and religious Princes. A great and almost perpetual Series of Successes has attended our Arms, through the various events and hazards of a long, bloody, and expensive War; against the deep Counsels, and formidable Strength, of a cunning, potent, and formerly long-successful Enemy: And at the same time, we our selves sit every Man under his Vine, and under his Fig-tree, in the secure and peaceable enjoyment of whatever each one has a Right to possess. We enjoy almost all the Happiness and Blessings of
Peace,

Peace, even in the midst of a vigorous and bloody War; while the Sword and Fire consume round about us, and other fruitful Countries are ravaged and destroyed; while *Thousands fall besides us, and Ten Thousands at our Right-hand*, and yet Providence protects us, that it *comes not nigh us*; while Want and Famine spreads Desolation among our Neighbours, and Pestilence at a Distance threatens still severer Judgments of God. We are not liable to be perpetually spoiled, by the Violence of Arbitrary Power; and to be daily bereaved of our nearest and most valuable Rights, at the mere Will and Pleasure of a lawless Oppressor; But under the happy Influences of a mild and most Auspicious Government, and under the Protection of Wise and good Laws, we enjoy as much Liberty as can be desired by any, who aim not at the Confusions of unlimited Licentiousness. And, to complete this Happiness, we are *not only allowed* the free Exercise of the Reformed Religion, (which under some Governments, who call themselves *Christian*, is persecuted even unto Death; and which we all remember the time, when we had great reason to apprehend we should have been deprived of it;) but the *Profession* of it is moreover encouraged by *Law*, and the *Practice* of it recommended not only by the *Command*, but (which is of greater Influence) by the hearty *Example* also, of our pious and most religious Queen, who *in every Work that She begins in the Service of the House of God, and in the Law, and in the Commandments, to seek Her God, She does it with all Her Heart, and prospers*, 2 Chron. 31. 21.

If these be things which are the proper Subjects of Praise and Thanksgiving, and call for the heartiest Expressions of our Gratitude to *Him who redeemeth*

our Life from Destruction, and crowneth us with Mercy and Loving-kindness; undoubtedly there is no Nation under the Sun, that has more reason this Day,

Psal. 116; than we, to say, What shall I render unto the Lord for all his Benefits that he has done unto me? I will offer to him the Sacrifice of Thanksgiving, and will call upon the Name of the Lord. And O that

Men would indeed, with their Mouths and

from their Hearts, by the Confession of their Lips, and in the Actions of their Lives, therefore praise the Lord for his Goodness, and declare the Wonders that he doth for the Children of Men! That

they would exalt him also in the Congregation of the People, and praise him in the Seat of the Elders! That there were in All of Us such a Heart,

that, by making suitable returns of Praise and Obedience to God, for his past and present Benefits; we might show our selves worthy of the Continuance of his Favour, and secure for the future the same Blessings to our selves and our Posterity! Could we but prevail with our selves, not to abuse that Plenty wherewith God has blessed us, by Intemperance and Debauchery: Could we in the midst of that Peace, which we enjoy even while War surrounds us, forbear unreasonable Contentions, and lay aside our Unchristian Heats and Animosities among our selves: Could we but use that Liberty we so justly value and boast of, so as not to abuse it to Licentiousness and Wantonness: Could we but in any Measure perswade our selves to practice the Religion, we are so zealous to profess; and banish from a Christian and a reformed Nation, Infidelity, Profaneness, and Immorality: In a word, could we but find in our Hearts to glorify God worthily for his

his great Mercies, and offer him *Praises* suitable to the wonderful Works which he has done for us; that is, *Praises* accompanied with the Works of Righteousness, so as to *honour* him indeed; This would be truly such an *ordering our Conversation aright*, that we might with good Grounds hope to have the Promise in the Text fulfilled upon our selves; and, by the Continuance of the same, and the Addition of more Blessings, might see compleated in us the *Salvation of God*. *Who so offereth Praise, glorifies me; and to him that ordereth his Conversation aright, will I shew the Salvation of God.*

In the Words we may observe these Four Things.

1. That God is to be glorified or *honoured* in All our Actions. *He glorifies me.*

2. That, *more particularly*, upon occasion of any great *Mercy*, any remarkable *Blessing*, or *signal interposition of Providence* on our behalf, we ought to show forth his *Glory* by the most publick *Acknowledgments*, by the heartiest *Praises and Thanksgivings* to him. *Who so offereth Praise, glorifies me.*

3. That He that will return *Thanks* to God acceptably for past Mercies, so as to glorifie him indeed; must for the future live suitably to that Profession he pretends to make, of his *Sense of Gods Providence governing the World*, and of his entire dependence upon it. *To him that ordereth his Conversation aright.*

4. That to Them who thus order their *Conversation aright*, here is a Promise added, of yet farther Blessings. *I will shew them the Salvation of God.*

1. That God is to be glorified or *honoured* in All our Actions. This is implied in those Words, *he glorifies me*: For, the declaring in what Manner, or by what Actions God is most glorified; and who the

Persons are that do most truly *honour* him; is pre-supposing the Knowledge and Obligation of the Duty itself, that *God is to be glorified or honoured in All our Actions*: That is; *that* we are at all times, and in all places, to have a constant Regard to him, and Dependance upon him; to have a perpetual Sense of him upon our Minds, and to make continual Acknowledgments to him upon all proper Occasions; *that* he is the Author and Preserver of our Life and Being; *that* on him we rely, for all the good things we hope for; and by his Permission, by his Grace and Favour, enjoy whatever Good we at present possess; *that* to him all possible Praise and Thanksgiving is due, for the Prosperity or Success we at any time meet with, either in our private, or in the publick Affairs; *that* by Him Kings Reign, and Princes decree Justice; *that* His Blessing it is upon a Nation, whenever pious Princes are established upon the Throne, and their Affairs prosper under a wise Administration, and Success accompanies their Arms *abroad*, and Peace and Plenty crowns their indeavours *at Home*: On the contrary, that ill Successes in any of our Undertakings; the blasting and defeating any of our Designs; the Calamities and Afflictions, of whatever kind they be, that at any time fall upon us; are still the strokes of the same Hand, the Appointment of the same wise Providence, the good Pleasure of the same Supreme Governour and Director of all Things; designed for our Correction and Improvement, to withdraw our Affections from Vanity and Trust in the World, and to lead us to Repentance and Amendment. This is, according to the wise Mans Advice, *Acknowledging God in all our Ways*: This is promoting a true Sense, of Religion and Piety in the World:

World: This is *honouring* and *glorifying* God. For, *the Glory of God*, is not any thing accruing to God himself; 'tis not any Addition to his Greatness or Happiness, or any Accession to the Perfections of his Nature: But, as the true Glory of a Prince, is the Obedience and the Prosperity of his Subjects; so the true Notion of the *Glory of God*, is nothing else but the advancing and establishing his Kingdom among Men; and the Kingdom of God, saith St Paul, is, *Righteousness, Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghost*. 'Tis something within our selves, as our Saviour affirms, St Luke 17. 21. 'Tis the Conformity of the Creature to the Nature and Life of God, to the Law and Happiness of Heaven, by the Obedience of the Gospel, and by the Reconciliation of their Nature to the eternal and unchangeable Law of Righteousness and Holiness. Promoting the Glory of God therefore, is nothing else but advancing the Interest of true Religion, and promoting the Practice of Virtue in the World. For, as Irreligion and neglect of God, Profaneness or any vitious Practice, in those who pretend to believe; do (as is said in the Case of David) give great occasion to the Enemies of God to blaspheme; and they who make their boast in the Law, as St Paul expresses it, do, by transgressing the Law, dishonour God; and the Name of God is through them blasphemed among Unbelievers: So, on the contrary, they who by unfeigned Piety, and regard to God in the whole Course of their Lives, make their Light to shine before Men; do, by letting others see their good Works, cause Men to glorify their Father which is in Heaven; That is, they bring other Men over to a true Sense of Religion, and perswade them to have a just Value and Esteem for

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for it. This is the true Notion of the *Glory of God*: This is *doing all Things* for his Honour and Glory. And in this Sense 'tis manifest it is our indispensable Duty, to *honour and glorifie God in All our Actions*; by keeping up in *our own Minds* a constant Sense of him, of his Power and Greatness, of his Wisdom and Providence in governing the World, and disposing of all Events; and, as much as in us lies, exciting the same Sense of him, and dependence upon him, in the Minds of *Others* likewise.

2. As God is in some Measure to be honoured or glorified by *all our Actions* in general; so more particularly, upon occasion of any great *Mercy or Deliverance*, upon occasion of any remarkable *Blessing or signal Interposition of Providence on our behalf*, ought we to show forth his *Glory* by the most publick *Acknowledgments*, by the highest Expressions of our *Gratitude*, by the heartiest *Praises and Thanksgivings to him*: *Who so offereth Praise, glorifies me*; Or, as it is in the former Translation, *Who so offereth me Thanks and Praise, he honoureth me*. 'Tis All the Return, that weak and dependent Creatures are capable of making to the supreme Lord and Governor of all Things; and therefore he is graciously pleased to accept it, as a sufficient *Reward for all the Benefits that he has done unto us*. Our *Goodness extendeth not to him*, Psal. 16. 2; neither can *Man be profitable to God*, as he that is wise may be profitable unto himself, Job 22. 12. But tho' we cannot make him any return for his Benefits, yet *thankful to him for them we can be*; and most inexcusable are we, if we neglect to be so. All that we are able to do, is to make humble Acknowledgments of the *Mercies* we receive from him; and therefore we ought to do it in the gratefullest, and in the most publick
and

and hearty manner we can. Adversity and Afflictions, such Corrections and Chastisements as his Fatherly Hand thinks fit at any time to lay upon us, it becomes us to bear with patient Submission, and silent Resignation to his Will; as being just Reproofs for our Sins, and Calls to Reformation and Repentance: But Blessings and Instances of Mercy, especially publick and national Blessings, call for publick Acknowledgments in such Expressions of Praise and Gratitude, as may declare to the World our being duly sensible from what Hand they come. Upon account of the Works of *Creation*, all, even inanimate Creatures, are in Scripture called upon to praise the Lord; That is, to contribute Matter, and afford perpetual Occasion by the Meditation of them to all rational Creatures to sing his Praises; *Praise him*, (that is, afford continual subject-matter for his Praises,) *O ye Sun and Moon*; Psal. 148, *praise him, all ye Stars of Light*, &c. The 3.

Works of *Providence*, are no less great and conspicuous, than those of *Creation*; And for These works, Men, who are chiefly and most immediately concern'd in them, and who alone are able to discern and judge of them, are in Scripture requir'd perpetually to praise him: To praise him *perpetually*; because the Number and Variety of them is so great, that no Tongue can worthily or sufficiently extol them: *Who can express the noble Acts of the Lord, or shew forth all his Praise?* Psal. 106. 2.

'Tis the least that any reasonable Person can do, in return for great Benefits; to make a thankful Acknowledgment of them, to *him* from whom he receiv'd 'em. And yet because 'tis *All*, (as I before observ'd) that weak and dependent Creatures can pay to *Him* who is absolute Lord of all Things; there-

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therefore, when it proceeds from a sincere Mind and hearty Affection, it is accepted by him as the most valuable Sacrifice. *Ver. 9. of this 50th Psalm; I will take no Bullock, saith God, out of thy House, nor He-goats out of thy Fold; For all the Beasts of the Forest are mine, and so are the Cattle upon a Thousand Hills: Will I eat the Flesh of Bulls, or drink the Blood of Goats? No: But offer unto God Thanksgiving, and pay thy Vows unto the most High; And call upon me in the Day of Trouble; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorifie me.* Again, *Psal. 116. 12, 17. What shall I render unto the Lord, for all the Benefits that he has done unto me? I will offer to him the Sacrifice of Thanksgiving, and will call upon the Name of the Lord.* And *Psal. 69. 30, 31. I will praise the Name of God with a Song, and will magnify him with Thanksgiving; This also shall please the Lord, better than a Bullock that has Horns and Hoofs.* The same Notion is very elegantly expressed by the Prophet *Hosea, c. 14. v. 2. We will render the Calves of our Lips; i. e. we will return to God such hearty Thanks for his Mercies, as shall be more acceptable to him than the Sacrifices of Calves or Sheep: The Phrase is translated by the LXX, the Fruit of our Lips; and so St Paul cites it, Heb. 13. 15. Let us offer the Sacrifice of Praise to God continually; that is, the Fruit of our Lips, giving Thanks to his Name.*

The Obligation to this Duty, is so evident and so reasonable, that it is sometimes in Scripture put for the whole of Religion; and the Neglect of it, marked as a total Defection from God. Thus *St Paul, Rom. 1. 21. describing the inexcusable Corruption of the Heathen World, puts it principally upon this; because that when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were Thankful,*

but

but became vain in their Imaginations, and their foolish Heart was darkned. They could not but know God, by his Works; yet they were not Thankful, nor glorified him according to that Knowledge; therefore, says the Apostle, *they are without Excuse*. The plainer and more obvious the Duty is, and the more fully God has declared his Acceptance of it, to Us who enjoy the Advantage of Revelation; the more unworthy still, and the more inexcusable, is *Unthankfulness* and Neglect of him. It is the perpetual Complaint of the Prophets in the Old Testament, that after all the great things that God had done for the Nation of the Jews, their Ingratitude was most provoking to him; *He made them ride on the high places of the Earth, that they might eat the increase of the Fields, and suck Honey out of the Rock, and Oyl out of the flinty Rock: But Jerusalem waxed fat and kicked; ---he soon forsook the God which made him, and lightly esteemed the Rock of his Salvation, Deut. 32. 13.* And 'tis recorded of a great and good King; one, of whom the Scripture testifies, that in other things he *did that which* 2 Kings 18. *was right in the sight of the Lord, so that* 3. 5. before him there was none equal to him, neither after him arose there any like him; it is noted of him, even of good King *Hezekiah*, as a very great blemish, as a thing very unnatural and unbecoming him, and at which God was highly displeased; that, after the Lord had destroy'd his Enemies, by sending an Angel which cut off all the mighty Men of Valour, and the Leaders and Captains in the Camp of the King of Assyria; and after he had miraculously caused him to recover from a mortal Disease; yet he *rendred not again according to the Benefit done unto him; for his Heart was lifted up; therefore there was Wrath upon him,*

him, and upon Judah and Jerusalem, 2 Chron. 32.
21, 25.

The many wonderful Victories that God has granted Us, over the Armies of a Prince more Potent than the King of *Assyria*, and who has often thought to swallow us up more easily, than *Sennacherib* did to destroy *Jerusalem*, and over-run the Land of *Judaea*; the many wonderful Victories, I say, which God has given Us, and particularly the great Successes wherewith he has blessed us this present Year, and for which we are now met together to return him Thanks; are such as will set as great or greater a mark of Ingratitude upon Us, if our real Thankfulness be not answerable to our outward Expressions of Joy, and our consequent Behaviour suitable to both.

The Fatigue and Length of the foregoing Campaign, which had been drawn out into the very midst of Winter; the extreme Rigor of the ensuing Season, and the backwardness of the Spring, which occasioned such a scarcity of Forage, that it was impossible to open the Campaign before the Summer was far spent; and at the same time the Artifices made use of by our Enemies to amuse us with false Appearances and deceitful Insinuations of their desire of Peace, and to try if from thence Means might be found to create any Divisions or Jealousies among the Allies; gave some hopes to *France*, that they should have been able to avoid the Blow wherewith they were threatned; and that, by gaining Time, they might, at least for this Summer, have escaped the Danger, to which by their former Losses they seem'd to be exposed. But the Providence of God, directing our Counsels, the Unanimity and Steadiness of the Allies, the Prudence and

and Vigilance of our Generals, and the Indefatigableness of our Troops, entirely disappointed the Enemies Expectation: And the Campaign began with the taking of one of the strongest Fortresses in *Europe*; in the Fortifying of which, no Pains, no Cost had been spared, for a Trial how far it was possible to increase Strength by the Perfection of Art. To prevent further Losses of this kind, the Enemy resolved to hazard a Battle; yet in such Circumstances, that, according to the usual Measure and Judgment of Events in War, they thought themselves to run no *hazard*. But in the Issue it appear'd, that, thro' the Courage and Conduct of our Generals, whose Greatness as no History can parallel, so no Character can do Justice to; and thro' the Bravery and Intrepidity of our Troops, which as no Difficulties can withstand, so no Words can sufficiently express; those mighty Intrenchments, those double and treble Defences, wherein the Enemies thought themselves so secure, served only to increase the Glory of the Arms of the Allies, and to convince the Enemy how little hopes remained of their ever gaining any Advantage over those Troops upon *equal* Ground, against whom they could not defend themselves upon the *most unequal*. Nevertheless, according to their usual *Vanity*, they boasted of a Victory; Unless we will rather ascribe it to their beginning to put on some degree of *Modesty*, when they declare they esteem it the noblest Achievement, and the greatest Height of their Glory, to have been able to make a *Retreat* after being beaten, with *less Loss than usual*. But in a Matter of this Nature, it is not of so much importance what *Representations*, what *artful Descriptions* may be made of the Action itself: 'Tis the *Effect*, the

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Consequences of great Actions, that afford the truest Judgment of the Greatness of the Success. And here it was sufficiently evident *on which Side*, and *to what Degree*, Victory declar'd itself; when the immediate Consequence of the Battle, was the laying Siege to another strong Town, and the taking it in a very short time; without the Enemies being in a condition so much as to *offer at any Attempt* of coming to its Relief.

For these great and continu'd Successes, where-with the Providence of God has vouchsafed to Bless us, let us make Thankful Acknowledgment to his Divine Majesty, in the Words of David, 1 Chron. 29. 11. *Thine, O Lord, is the Greatness, and the Power, and the Glory, and the Victory, and the Majesty; for all that is in the Heaven, and in the Earth, is thine; thine is the Kingdom, O Lord, and thou art exalted as Head above all: Both Riches and Honour come of thee, and thou reignest over all, and in thine Hand is Power and Might, and in thine Hand it is to make Great, and to give Strength unto all: Now therefore, our God, we thank thee, and praise thy Glorious Name.*

To neglect acknowledging the Hand of Providence in these great Events, would be not only base *Ingratitude and Unworthiness*, but also the greatest and most inexcusable *Inconsiderateness*. For since the *Race is not always to the Swift, nor the Battle to the Strong*; since the Wisest Counsels do not always Prosper, nor the best laid Designs constantly take Effect; but the Providence of God over-rules all Events, by secret and undiscern'd Springs; 'Tis to his Blessing wholly, we must thankfully acknowledge, that even the best concerted Measures owe their Success. 'Tis by his Blessing, that *Unanimity* is preserv'd among *Allies*, that *Generals* are inspir'd with *Wisdom*, and *Troops* with *Undauntedness and Bravery*;

Bravery; and 'tis by the Continuance of the same Blessing, that That *Unanimity, Conduct and Courage*, are attended with Success. *Unanimity* has been, with the greatest Advantage, on our Enemies side: Their Soldiers sometimes have not been void of *Bravery*, nor their *Generals* of *Skill*. Yet have they been defeated in Battle after Battle, till the Strength of the potentest Monarch upon Earth has been almost entirely broken, and his Power reduc'd to an Extremity of Distress. *The King shall mourn,* Ezek. 7.
and the Prince shall be cloathed with Desolati- 27.
on, and the Hands of the People of the Land shall be
troubled; I will do unto them after their way, and ac-
ording to their Deserts will I judge them: That
they may see, and know, and consider, and un- Isa. 41.
derstand together, that the Hand of the Lord 20.
has done this, and the Holy One of Israel has created it:
That they may know that this is thy Hand, Psal. 109.
and that thou, Lord, hast done it. 27.

Neither ought it to be omitted, that, next under God, who is the first Author of all Victory, all due Honour and Acknowledgment is to be paid to the *Instruments*, by which our Successes have been accomplish'd; the Wisdom and Conduct of the *Generals*, and the Bravery of those who executed their Commands. For, tho' Providence has indeed, in the whole Course of this War, very signally interpos'd in our behalf; yet not by immediate Miracle, as in the Days of *Jehosaphat* King of *Judah*, when it was said to them by the Prophet, *2 Chron. 20. 17.*
Ye shall not need to fight in this Battle; set your selves,
stand ye still, and see the Salvation of the Lord; But
the Blessings of Providence are convey'd to Us, thro' the Wisdom and Diligence of second Causes. For, as, on the one hand, without the Blessing of

Providence, the greatest Wisdom of Man is Folly, and his Strength Weakness; and a Horse is counted

but a vain thing to save a Man, neither shall it deliver any Man by its great Strength; lo

neither on the other hand have we Now any reason to expect, that Providence will work for us direct Miracles, but only bless the Endeavours of subordinate Causes. Wherefore all due Acknowledgments ought to be made to the Instruments, by whose means we are deliver'd from our Enemies, and by whose Hands is work'd for us *the Salvation of God*; And it is noted in Scripture as a great Reproach upon the Children of *Israel*, that they were sometimes ungrateful to the Persons by whom God had work'd their Deliverance, and that they remember'd 'em not according to all the Goodness that they had shew'd unto *Israel*, *Jude. 8. 35.*

3. He that will return Thanks to God acceptably for past Mercies, so as to Glorify him indeed; must for the future live suitably to that Profession he pretends to make, of his Sense of God's Providence in governing the World, and of his entire Dependence upon it: *To him that ordereth his Conversation aright.* The Expressions of our present Joy, must be such as become the Gospel of Christ; and the following Part of our Lives must show, that our Praises proceed not out of feigned Lips. Publick Praises and Thanksgivings are acceptable to God, as part of our Religious Worship and Adoration of him; but it is then only so, when the Declarations of our Mouths are the real Significations of the Intentions of our Hearts, and our Designs are not to abuse those Mercies which we Thank him for. We must so return our Thanks for past Mercies, as that, by their

their having a due Influence upon us, we may show our selves worthy of the Continuance of them, and of God's bestowing still more upon us; and then our Praise will be indeed an acceptable Sacrifice.

Rejoyce in the Lord, ye Righteous, saith the Psalmist, for it becometh well the Just to be Thankful, Psal.

31. 1. But of the *Wicked* it may truly be affirm'd, that as their *Prayer*, so their *Praise* also is an *Abomination to the Lord*. Prov. 28. 9.

4. To them who thus order their *Conversation aright*, here is a Promise added of yet farther Blessings: *I will shew them the Salvation of God*. They who worthily express their Thanks for *past Mercies*, not by debauch'd and unseemly Mirth, but by truly honouring and fearing God, may reasonably hope for *more occasions of Praising him*. If ye be *Willing and Obedient*, ye shall eat the *Fat of the Land*; and the Lord will *delight to do you good*. Isa. 1. 19. Our Praises and Thanksgivings for *past Victories*, if accompany'd with sincere Obedience, will be, like the lifting up of *Moses's Hands* upon the Mount, a certain Evidence Exod. 17. 11.

of future Success. God has already blest the Endeavours of our Pious Queen with so great Prosperity, that we may justly say with the Psalmist, *Psal. 20. 6. Now know I that the Lord helpeth his Anointed, and will hear him from his Holy Heaven, even with the wholesome Strength of his Right hand: Some put their Trust in Chariots, and some in Horses, but we will remember the Name of the Lord our God: They are brought down and fallen, but we are risen and stand upright: Nay, we have reasonable Grounds to apply to our Enemies the Prophet Nahum's Lamentation over the King of Assyria, ch. 3. v. 19. There is no healing of thy Bruise, thy Wound is grievous; all that*

hear the Bruit of thee, shall clap their Hands over thee, for upon whom has not thy Wickedness pass'd continually? Or That of the Prophet *Isaiah*, *ch. 14. v. 16.* They that see thee, shall narrowly look upon thee, and consider thee, saying, Is this the Man that made the Earth to tremble? That did shake Kingdoms? That made the World as a Wilderness, and destroy'd the Cities thereof? That open'd not the House of his Prisoners? The sudden breaking of so great a Power, shows how easily Providence, if we prove ungrateful to him, can even yet disappoint our most probable Hopes, and, after all our Successes, bring us to Confusion. But the Example of Piety set us from the Throne, will, we hope, so effectually discourage all Immorality and Profaneness, and, by spreading its Influence afar, excite in the Nation such a Spirit of Virtue and true Religion, that God may be entreated of us to continue to bless us with Success, till the present bloody and expensive War terminates in such a Peace, as may establish upon a lasting Foot the Liberties of Europe. The humble

Psal. 34. 2. shall see this, and be glad: And their Heart shall live, that seek God. For God will save
Psal. 69. 29. Zion, and build the Cities of Judah, that Men may dwell there, and have it in possession: The Posterity also of his Servants shall inherit it, and they that love his Name, shall dwell therein.

I add only a Word of Exhortation, and so conclude.

The Ground of our rejoycing, and returning Thanks to God for the Successes of the present War, is, that those Successes tend to secure to us the Ends, for which the War was at first undertaken; viz. the procuring a safe and lasting Peace, the Support and Establishment of the present Constitution of our Government,

ment, the maintaining the Rights and Liberties of ourselves and all Europe, and the Preservation of the Protestant Religion among us.

First therefore, if we will shew ourselves truly Thankful for the Successes of the War, let us endeavour to maintain such Unanimity among ourselves, as may convince our Enemies they can have no Hopes of putting an end to the War, but by consenting to such a Peace, as may be safe and lasting. And let us so lay aside all unreasonable Divisions and private Animosities, that whensoever it shall please God to put a successful End to the War abroad, we may enjoy the blessed Effects of Peace and Charity, of mutual Confidence and Agreement at home.

Secondly, Let us heartily endeavour to promote the Interest of that Government, the Support and Establishment whereof is one principal Effect of the Successes for which we publicly return Thanks to God. Let us contribute our utmost, each in our proper Stations, to support a Government so happily establish'd; and to make the executive part of it as easy, and as little burdensome as possible, in the Hands wherein it is lodg'd. To seek the Peace of the City or Country wherein we dwell, and in the Peace thereof to expect Peace, is Men's Duty and Interest, even under bad Governments: How much more, under the best and most wisely constituted Government in the World, under the easiest and gentlest Administration, under a Government wherein nothing else is design'd but the preserving the publick Welfare and Happiness, the Security and Establishment of the Protestant Religion, the maintaining the Rights and Liberties both of Nations and of private Persons against Tyranny and

and Oppression; must all such be utterly inexcusable, who, under any Pretences whatever, foment Divisions and Animosities, Jealousies and groundless Suspicions, to weaken the Hands of the Government, and prevent the perfecting and securing upon a lasting Foot the fore-mention'd great and excellent Ends! We have been rescu'd by wonderful Deliverances, from the Rod of Arbitrary Power, from the Follies of Enthusiasm, and from the Superstitions of Popery; *Should we again grow weary of our own Happiness, and despise the Liberty wherewith God has bless'd us; should we again desire to join in Affinity with the People of these Abominations; would it not be just with God to suffer them still to become Thorns in our Sides, and their Gods to be a Snare unto us, and that he should be angry with us till he had consum'd us?* Ezra. 9. 12.

Thirdly, Let us take great Heed, lest by running into lawless and ungovernable Licentiousness, we abuse and destroy those *Rights and Liberties*, which have been long so earnestly and so justly contended for; and which the Successes we are now returning Thanks for, are the Means of securing to us upon a solid Foundation. God has bless'd us with great and glorious Success against our *Foreign Enemies*, which we hope he will continue to us, till the *Liberties of Europe* be establish'd by a firm and lasting Peace. Let us not, after *That*, become Enemies to *Ourselves*, by a Licentiousness impatient of the most necessary Restraints; lest by our own Unthankfulness and *Intestine Confusions*, we deprive ourselves of the Benefit of a Blessing purchas'd with so much Blood and Treasure; and provoke God to suffer us to destroy ourselves, by losing our *Liberty* wholly, while we affect more of it than is just and reasonable.

or

or consistent with good Order and Government and the Publick Safety. For as, on the one hand, the Abuse of Arbitrary Power in *Governors*, has generally been the Occasion of putting People upon recovering the Liberties they had lost; so, on the other hand, Licentiousness or Abuse of Liberty in the *People*, tends always to such Confusions, as terminate usually in Arbitrary Power again.

Fourthly, And above all, let us take care to *Pra-
mise* the Religion we *Profess*, and for the Preserva-
tion whereof we are so highly concern'd. One of
the Principal Benefits of all the glorious Successes
God has bless'd us with, is the securing the Re-
form'd Religion amongst us, against the Attempts of
Popish Superstition: But what will it profit us, to
bear the Name and Profession of a *Reform'd Religi-
on*, if in our Practice and in Reality we have *no Re-
ligion at all*? Of what Use will it be to us, to be
secur'd from the Vanities and Superstitions of Po-
pery; if on the contrary we run into Atheism, Ir-
religion and Prophaneness?

Christianity itself, our Saviour assures us, is of
no Advantage to those who do not obey *the Will
of his Father which is in Heaven*; but their Portion
will be among *Unbelievers*. In like manner neither
can any particular *Reformation of Religion* from the
grossest Corruptions that have crept into it, be of
any Benefit to those, whose *Manners* are not *reform'd*
together with their Profession.

God, who commandeth the *Light to shine out of
Darkness*, grant that the *Light of the Glorious Gospel
of Christ, who is the Image of God*, may so 2 Cor. 4. 4.
shine in our Hearts, as that we may bring 6.
forth Fruit worthy of that *Light of the Knowledge of
the Glory of God, in the Face of Jesus Christ*.

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